The Alaskan Churchman

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ALASKA - "The Great Land"

Even we in the Territory who are used to distances are often amazed at the vast expanses that are Alaska. An area of five hundred and eighty-six thousand miles rolls glibly off one's tongue; nearly three times as big as Texas and one-fifth the size of the whole United States are still comparative terms and somewhat meaningless because not many of us travel all over Texas, or often cover one-fifth of the United States.

So we in the course of a recent half year's journeys in our task for the Church have been amazed anew at the size of our missionary jurisdiction.

Late in April we traveled in the company of several fellow workers nine hundred miles southeastward to Ketchikan for our annual clergy conference. It is estimated that the eleven clergy gathered there in conference traveled a total of fifteen thousand miles. While in this southeast corner of the District, we visited also our churches at Wrangell, Petersburg, Sitka, Juneau and Skagway, scattered over three hundred miles from Ketchikan. So a trip of nine hundred miles (one way) and several hundred miles of local traveling covers our Southeast extreme from Fairbanks.

Early in June we flew two hundred miles due east of Fairbanks to the Canadian border of Eagle to leave a young seminarian there for the summer, and that represents the eastern bound of the Church in Alaska.

A few days later we ventured seven hundred miles northwest of Fairbanks—almost two hundred miles inside the Arctic Circle to Point Hope and the northwestern tip of our boundaries, and early in September we flew due north three hundred miles to Arctic Village and our District's northern edge.

Just a few weeks ago at the invitation of the military, we traveled almost fifteen hundred miles to the westward to visit the Navy and Air Force Base at Adak on the Aleutian Chain. Even then we might have gone another three hundred miles west to the boundary of the International Dateline and the small base on the island of Shemya and still a part of the Territory of Alaska.

So the Church in this missionary jurisdiction revolves around a hub at Fairbanks — fifty missions scattered nine hundred miles southeastward; three hundred miles north; two hundred miles due east; seven hundred miles northwest; and finally a scattered few Episcopalians fifteen hundred miles to the westward. That is the family of the Church—our task is to minister wherever our people are. We find them in the lovely new All Saints' Church in Anchorage; in the simple log Bishop Rowe Chapel at Arctic Village; in the vocational school and hospital at Sitka; in windswept sod igloos along the Arctic Coast, and in military bases all over the Territory — Eskimos, Indians, whites, Negroes—all one in the fellowship of the family of God.

New Church Dedicated in Anchorage

The new All Saints', Anchorage, Parish Hall and Rectory

Sunday, August 30, was a great day in the life of All Saints' Parish, Anchorage. A new church, parish hall and rectory valued at nearly three hundred thousand dollars were dedicated to God's use and the service of His people as the fulfillment of dreams for many years. To make the day a really perfect one the preacher at the dedication service was the Rt. Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill, D.D., Presiding Bishop of the Church. Bishop and Mrs. Sherrill spent three days in Alaska en route to the Orient and brought many blessings to our people in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Bishop Sherrill was largely responsible for the initial loan and grant made to All Saints' that gave the real impetus to get the building program under way.

Over seven hundred people attended the four services held in the new church on the day of Dedication and a new era in the life of the Church in Anchorage has begun. The new church, semi-modernistic in design, seats three hundred persons, and is well adapted to meet the growing needs of the parish. Underneath the church is one of the finest basements in Alaska—90'x35'—and unobstructed for its length and width. Two kitchens adjoin it and also connected is the parish house with nine classrooms, choir rooms, parish office and lovely guild room. A three-bedroom rectory is attached to the same building to complete our finest church plant in Alaska.

It is impossible to mention all who are responsible for this great advance in our work with the Church in Alaska. Certainly initial credit should go to the Rev. Warren R. Fenn, in charge of All Saints' for seventeen years and under whom the great growth in All Saints' Parish began. The parish hall has been named Fenn Hall in his honor. Credit must surely go to the Rev. Albert Sayers, the present rector, who has worked untiringly and without losing his enthusiasm to bring this new plant to actual reality. Of the others who have helped, and they are countless, one name surely heads all the rest—that of Maynard Smith, vestryman and general contractor. Mr. Smith did all the contracting for the whole building and refused to accept any pay for

ALL SAINTS', ANCHORAGE

Vestryman Smith opening the door to the Bishops (Sherrill and Gordon), the Rector and the forty-five voice choir.

it. In addition he was able to save money for the parish in a great many other ways, at the same time giving his time and talents unstintingly that a building might be erected truly to the glory of God and the blessing of His family. It is estimated that Mr. Maynard's contribution was well over fifty thousand dollars, and there is no question but that the whole building program would have fallen short without his constant and unselfish support.

The history of All Saints' is one with the history of the city of Anchorage. The town was started in 1915 when the government decided to make the terminus of a railroad into the interior. Col. Frederick B. Mears, an ardent Episcopalian, was chairman and chief engineer of the Alaska Engineering Commission by appointment of the U.S. government. He was the leader in establishing the church in these parts. Before the town was organized and while the hardy pioneers were living in tents a group of Episcopalians began meeting in a log building for services. At this time a women's guild was formed and this was the beginning of a group of faithful workers who through the years have given valuable service to the parish.

Bishop Rowe, ever alert to the possibility of establishing a new church, visited the site of the new town in 1915 and when the town was divided into lots he chose a location at the corner of Third and K streets that overlooked Cook Inlet. This location was near the proposed railroad and it was the Bishop's desire that the new church should be the first building to be seen by the newcomers approaching the town for the first time. Funds were obtained from the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in New York and the church building was erected in the same year, thus making it one of the first buildings constructed in the town of Anchorage

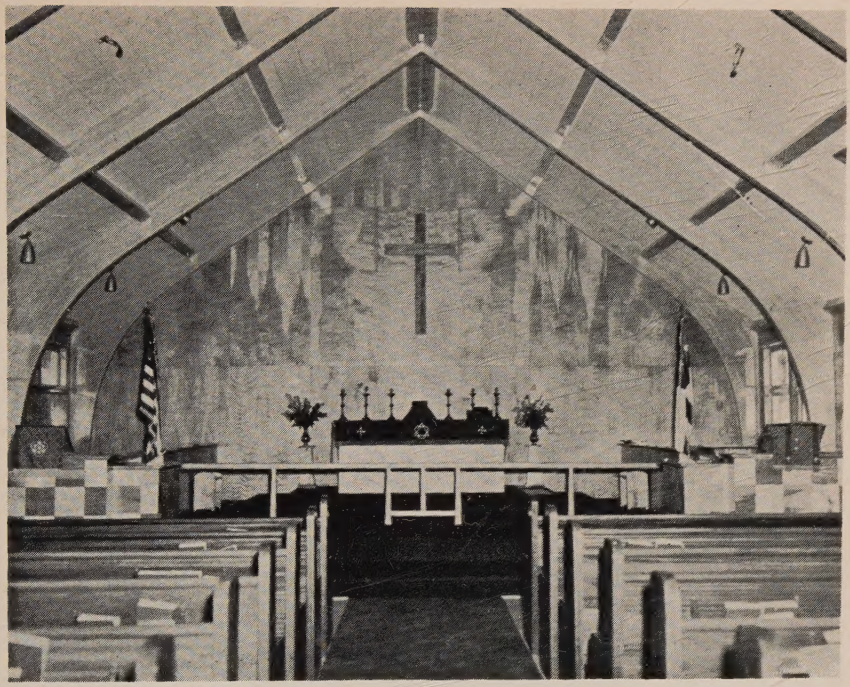
after the town was organized. This was the same house of worship used by the congregation of All Saints' until December 23, 1953.

After a time it was found that the site of the new church was not too desirable. It was too far from the center of town and the approach to it was over an embankment, making it extremely difficult for the faithful to reach their place of worship through the snow and cold of winter. Bishop Rowe then chose the present location at the corner of Fifth and F streets and in 1917 the church was moved at a cost of $1,900.00. Funds for this undertaking were obtained by the Bishop. The records show that the first service in the new location was held on May 6, 1917 with the Rev. E. W. Hughes as priest-in-charge. A three room rectory was built for him at the time the church was moved. Another room and a new kitchen were later added to the rectory and so it stands today. Bishop Rowe was again responsible for the $1,000.00 required for this project.

The ministry of the Rev. Mr. Hughes lasted until July 30, 1922 and on the following Sunday the Rev. Burdette Lansdowne started his ministry of three years. The Rev. Wm. Thomas came from Pt. Hope to take over as priest-in-charge in December of 1925 and remained until January of 1927. During this period the congregations were quite small so folding doors were built to close off half of the church and make the heating problem less difficult. The only source of heat was a round heating stove burning wood or coal. These folding doors were taken down early in the ministry of the Rev. Warren R. Fenn. When the Rev. Mr. Thomas concluded his ministry there was a vacancy in the mission for a period of three years. The only recorded services in this period are those of Bishop Rowe. In 1930 the United Thank Offering of the women of the Church provided the $5,000.00 necessary to excavate a basement beneath a portion of the rectory to make room for the church. This allowed the work of the mission to expand and was of great aid to the Women's Guild which had been doing a grand job for many years. The Rev. W. R. McPherson came to All Saints' in January of 1930 and had his final service on Nov. 20, 1932.

The Rev. Warren R. Fenn began his devoted and faithful ministry of almost 17 years on June 25, 1953, with only eleven in the congregation for his first service. Since that time All Saints' has had an almost steady growth. On April 8, 1934 the church building was consecrated by the Rt. Rev. Jno. B. Bentley. In 1940 the mission began paying $300.00 towards the salary of the priest-in-charge besides paying the current expenses of the church and rectory. A further step forward was made in January of 1944 when the congregation assumed responsibility for one-half of Fr. Fenn's salary at the request of the Bishop. The mission had grown considerably since the beginning of the war, aided by the tremendous influx in military personnel and civilian workers. The goal toward which the mission had been working was reached in January, 1945 when full support of the priest-in-charge was assumed and All Saints' became the first parish in the Missionary District of Alaska. The Rev. Warren R. Fenn became the first rector at that time.

From that time it was increasingly evident that the parish needed a larger plant to take care of the numbers attending services and the Church School. A building fund was started some years ago, but it was not until 1949 that definite steps were taken toward a building program. Two lots were purchased and paid for by the congregation. In the spring of 1950, the Rev. Warren R. Fenn announced his resignation as rector due to illness. The Rev. Albert J. Sayers became rector in the summer of 1950. Ground was broken on October 15, and a work party set about to raze the log building on the site and prepare the



Interior of the new All Saints', Anchorage

ground for the excavation. The building program was under way.

Early in 1951 the vestry retained Mr. J. Van Wer Bergamini, Architect Consultant of the National Council, to draw up the plans. A further incentive to push forward was given by the National Council in the form of a $25,000.00 grant and a $25,000.00 loan. A fund raising committee was appointed and before the end of the year more than $25,000.00 was pledged or paid into the Building Fund. The basement excavation was completed in May, 1951 and actual construction got under way on August 3 of the same year. A parish dinner was held in the new parish hall on December 13. The final service in the original building was held on December 23 and the first service in the church set up in the parish hall was held on Christmas Eve.

Work on the parish house and rectory continued throughout the winter and by spring of 1952 parts of the parish house and rectory were occupied. Work on the church nave was started in June of 1952 and continued until the exterior was finished. At this point the Vestry was facing $18,000.00 in unpaid bills and the interior finish of the nave and chancel would require another $12,000.00.

With a determination not to stop until the job was complete, because already there was a need for additional room, the congregation decided to sell $30,000.00 worth of Church Building Bonds. These bonds were on hand early in June, 1953, and the work of the interior moved forward. The last week in August saw the building ready for the first service.

Some of our Indian and Eskimo missions are very much in need of old copies of the MISSION HYMNAL. This edition is now out of print. If any parish or individual has even a few copies we will be more than glad to purchase them or even happier to receive them as a gift!

ORDINATION AT POINT HOPE

By the Rev. Gordon T. Charlton

The Rev. and Mrs. Rowland J. Cox

On Sunday, October 18, four clergy were gathered on the northwestern point of the American continent. The location was far north of the Arctic Circle and further west than Hawaii, on the tip end of a long sandspit which thrusts out into the Arctic Ocean toward Siberia. The occasion was the ordination of the Rev. Rowland J. Cox to the Priesthood. Never before had the Eskimos of this remote village beheld such a gathering of clergy. Never before had St. Thomas Mission, Point Hope, been the site of an ordination to the Priesthood.

On the Thursday preceding, the Rev. Robert Greene of Tanacross drove into Fairbanks. On Friday morning the Bishop's plane, "The Flying Blue Box", took off for the Arctic Coast, carrying the Bishop, the Rev. Mr. Greene, and the Rev. Gordon Charlton, Rector of St. Matthew's in Fairbanks. Speeding on the wings of a favorable wind, the Blue Box soon left behind the winding rivers, wooded hills, and jagged peaks of the interior for the rolling, treeless wasteland of the north, the Arctic tundra.

The first stop was the village of Kotzebue on the edge of the limitless Arctic Ocean, 460 miles from Fairbanks. Here a few minutes were

The Rev. Gordon T. Charlton, the Rev. Robert B. Greene and three Point Hope children.

spent refueling and gathering weather data for the remainder of the trip. The course from Kotzebue was northwest along the coastline, and there are no weather stations on the route. However, another pilot was approaching Point Hope at the time and he was giving reports by radio for the benefit of others. He reported low ceilings with possible freezing rain, but it was decided to make an attempt to reach Point Hope anyway and to land at Kivalina if necessary. The ceiling was indeed low, and the flight was made at only a hundred feet or so above the beach. Where Cape Thompson thrusts its sheer cliffs out into the sea, it was necessary to fly over the water, but the light rain did not freeze on the windshield or wings, and the visibility was sufficient to follow the coastline, so the Blue Box landed at Point Hope, having covered 620 miles from Fairbanks in four and three-quarters hours, to be greeted by Mr. Cox and many of the village people who came similingly to shake hands.

Since the ocean ice was not yet formed, seal hunting had not yet begun, and many of the Eskimo people were camping up the Kukpuk River fishing. However, everyone knew of the great event to come, and all day Saturday a steady procession of dog teams emerged from the foothills and crept out the long sandspit to the village. Everyone who possibly could was going to be present for the ordination on Sunday.

The visiting clergy were treated to the warm hospitality of Rowland and Mary Cox at the mission house. While the ordinand received his final examination at the hands of Mr. Charlton, the Bishop renewed old acquaintances, and Mr. Greene combed the beach for souvenirs to carry back to his Indian children of the interior.

Sunday morning dawned clear and calm. Long before time for the service, the Verger, the Interpreter, and the Altar Guild were on hand for instructions. The mission is a mile from the village, and soon the trail was a solid line of men, women and children, as the village emptied itself and the church filled to capacity. It is to be regretted that a recording of that service could not be made, for the singing was magnificent, and the congregational participation would serve as a lesson to many parishes. Acolytes and choir were trained to perfection, and one might have thought that the complicated service of ordination was an everyday occurrence at Point Hope. Mr. Charlton preached and the sermon was interpreted by Mr. Roy Vincent. Mr. Greene read the Litany and presented the ordinand. Bishop Gordon of course celebrated the Holy Communion and officiated at the ordination, with many parts of the service being translated into Eskimo by Mr. Vincent. As may be imagined, the service was quite long, but everyone down to the smallest infant stuffed into his mother's parka sat with rapt attention throughout.

Sunday afternoon the clergy and Mrs. Cox were guests at the service which is held in the village by the laymen. After hymns and preaching in Eskimo, each of the clergy spoke briefly and were further impressed by the sincerity and depth of understanding displayed by the people of Point Hope in their religious faith. It was heartening to see much visible results of the devoted labors of former missionaries who have brought these people so far in so few years.

Following the afternoon service, the visting Priests, the Bishop, and the Rev. and Mrs. Cox were guests in the homes of a number of people. The calling was brought to an end only by their inability to eat any more of the refreshments urged upon them and the improbability of declining politely the hospitality of these friendly people.

Monday morning the brand new Priest bade farewell to his wife and crowded into the Blue Box with the rest of the clergy. Taking off from the frozen beach, the plane headed northward again, over Cape Lisbourne, 150 miles to Point Lay, the northernmost mission station of our Church. The weather was favorable most of the way and there were sights of interest, such as a herd of caribou and some Eskimos dragging a walrus up the beach. However, a low fog bank appeared about twenty miles south of the destination, and again it was necessary to descend within a few feet of the surface. This time however, the visibility was obscured and a strong, gusty wind was blowing. There was a light drizzle which began to freeze on the plane. It seemed very doubtful that a landing could be made to deliver Mr. Cox to this outstation, but after many low passes over the beach to choose a suitable spot, the Bishop executed a superb landing under the most difficult of conditions. The plane was on the ground only long enough to unload Mr. Cox and his baggage; then it was aloft again, headed for Kotzebue to refuel and make arrangements for a bush pilot to pick up the new Arctic Priest and carry him on the next lap of his circuit. That evening, just at dusk, the Blue Box settled on the field in Fairbanks, having covered 1500 more miles in its service to the Church in Alaska.

There is no way to estimate the change that would come over the whole missionary outlook of our Church if every member could somehow share an experience such as this one. The continued prayers and support of every reader are desired for our work in the northland, and especially for Rowland and Mary Cox in the difficult and isolated, but infinitely rewarding work of their Arctic parish.

Forest Green Pants - - and a Red Flannel Shirt

By ALEXANDER OGILBY, ETS 1954

L to R: Andrew David, Chief Peter, Jessie David, Alexander Ogilby, Alfred Adams, and Titus David.

I remember reading somewhere not too long ago that the clerical collar, now the distinctive dress of many present-day ministers, was the invention of an Anglican clergyman several hundred years ago. And my studies in the history of the English Reformation have also told that very early in the game, the English divines adopted an easily recognizable habit. So one might expect this to be the case with the Episcopal Church even in the Missionary District of Alaska. And so it proved, for early in my stay in Tetlin, I was informed that Bishop Gordon could always be spotted by his manner of dress. Surprisingly enough it was not the familiar red cap which had caught Tetlin's eye but the invariable pair of forest green trousers which the Bishop wears when flying. I gently suggested that the Bishop doubtless had quite a supply of these garments, but I was quite emphatically told by Jimmy Henry, the Tetlin layreader, that no; "Bishop wear sam' pants five years now, sam' pants". Furthermore, it soon became obvious that the whereabouts of the newest Tetlin preacher was always indicated by the presence of a rather loud red flannel shirt which popped up almost everywhere and anywhere, even peeping out occasionally from under the collar of a staid black cassock. But I was soon accused of owning but one shirt and wearing "sam' shirt all summer".

But why such concern over a rather insignificant local joke? Because it seems to me that even this little thing has shown me something very important about the work of the Church in Tetlin. For underneath this banter is a very warm friendship from the people of Tetlin to those who have brought the message of God's love among them. It is a firm friendship, spiced with a keen sense of humor which shows a real acceptance of these strange white men who come from far away, but it is really based upon a

deep respect for the person, the word, and the witness which these men have borne. It took me a while to know the people here, trying to understand them and their ways, but while I was kind of feeling my way, I heard many stories and became very familiar with names like McIntosh, John Balcom, Roy Sommers and John Dixon. And I soon sensed that these men were remembered in a very real way, as good friends. Thus it was quite easy for me to find my place, for I inherited the fruits of the friendship and love which these devoted servants had given to Tetlin. I soon realized the respect and affection in which the people hold Bishop Gordon, and during some of those early and quite lonely days in Tetlin, the love that the people have for their Church and its ministers proved to be a real sustaining power to me. It has power, because at its heart it draws strength from a real unity of spirit, a daily communion together in the face of our Father who is in heaven.

Let me tell of one more incident. Early in the season we ran a Bible School here under the very capable direction of two of the young group of college workers from Southern Ohio who came north this summer, Joyce Merryman and Carol Strathman. These fine young women were very quick to find their way into the hearts of the people of Tetlin—and I know they will long be remembered for the newest baby, born into this village in August, now bears the name of Joyce Carol. Truly Tetlin is a friendly village.

We were disappointed that more children were not on hand for the ten-day Bible School—for a good many families were still up at Last Tetlin which is a fishcamp colony of this village where many of our people maintain a second home. I very early decided to make the trip up to Last Tetlin to hold services for those who had not been able to come to Tetlin to church for some time. And so, early one morning, ace pilot and guide Jimmy Henry started us on the lovely journey up the winding Tetlin River, alive with ducks and many evidences of beaver, across the broad expanse of Tetlin Lake and up the narrow headwaters of Tetlin Creek. We flashed at dizzying speed around narrow bends and between fallen logs which seemed to give us only inches of clearance on each side—at one time we even chugged right through a fish trap which lay squarely across the stream. But finally, forty-five minutes and two shear pins later, we came to the village, perched on a high bank and overlooking countless lakes and creeks ideal for fishing, hunting and trapping. There it was that I had my first introduction to Chief Luke and his wife, the oldest living inhabitant. We had a fine lunch of black duck, which tasted much better than it first looked to me, I must confess, and then held a memorable service to which the people slowly filed in, shy at meeting the new preacher, but eager to hear the word of God.

The Chief and I were to have many happy meetings later on—he told me one day that in his considered opinion I smoked far too much and seemed to enjoy it even more hugely when I rejoined that in my judgment he chewed too much tobacco for his health. And I shall never forget the night he nearly scalded me before I could escape from the hot steam bath while he industriously wielded a broad paddle to raise the inferno-like temperature even a few degrees higher. I soon found out that if you have to describe hell to the people of Tetlin, you'd best do it in terms of cold, or else they will surely choose to go to the after-life of the perpetual hot steam.

Many other names and faces crowd into my memory: Chief Peter Joe, leader of the village since 1921, who delighted in telling me stories of the history of Tetlin and its people, and especially of the days before the

Joyce Merryman and Carol Strathman with some of their Daily Vacation Bible School students at Tetlin.

white man. Chief is intensely proud of this village and has lived to watch the erection of the government day school, the co-operative native store, the setting aside of this area as the Tetlin Indian Reservation, and the building, two years ago, of the fine church house, St. Andrew's Mission, with its neat little log cabin rectory alongside. In fact all the village is proud of this church, for it is something they have built themselves and so have built Christ's Church into a permanent place in their own lives as well as the corporate life of the village. And in the rectory, one is reminded of the story of Elisha and the Shunamite woman who built a chamber for the prophet—"Let us make a small roof chamber with walls, and put there for him a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so that whenever he comes to us, he can go in there".

And then there is Andrew David, staunch and constant companion, who in his own quiet way, made sure that I was never too lonely. Andrew was always first to volunteer his help in any construction or carpentry projects that arose. So we spent many happy hours together, and I learned much from this skilled craftsman and devoted Christian. Another constant companion of Andrew was his youngest son Gary, age two, and one of the cutest youngsters in the village. He was usually seen toddling along some path, a wide smile on his face, eager to "help Daddy" at whatever he happened to be doing. This even included going to church and I firmly believe that by the end of the summer Gary knew every square inch of that church floor better than those who had laid it.

Andrew was fond of taking a "walk" in the evening, and his favorite path lay right past my door and out into the bush. I would generally continue with my work but with one ear cocked

St. Andrew's Chapel and Rectory, Tetlin

for the usual sharp crack of the .22 which would soon come. After a while Andrew would return at his regular measured pace—I rarely counted fewer rabbits than I had heard shots.

On the fishing scene there was tirelessly cheerful Jimmy Henry whose vaunted prowess with the rod and reel was demonstrated for me only once when a medium-sized pike was stupid enough to swallow his spinner up at Last Tetlin. But Jimmy was ever obliging to ferry me wherever I wanted to go, and we also spent many hours together in Bible reading and study. He is a good steward of God's word and his faithful visiting and friendship have meant much to the people of Tetlin. His presence here and example have greatly benefitted the work of the Church.

And there was Jimmy Joe, the native storekeeper, who always seemed to be able to dig out for me just what I needed at a crucial moment—much to my surprise, and often I believe, to his also. Jimmy and I had delightful times together as he had a keen sense of humor and loved joking. I grew terribly attached too to his puppy whom I christened Hurricane, a perfect description of the character of his attacks upon my shoe laces and trousers cuffs. Jimmy was also the captain of the village freight boat which I vehemently insisted should be rebaptized as The Alaskan Queen because of the strong similarities to its African prototype. All summer long this floating warehouse plied the tortuous river back and forth to Forty Mile at irregular intervals to haul gasoline, fuel oil, food and other freight to supply the village. Its motor had a character of its own—cranky, most of the time—and I was often called upon to lend my totally unskilled advice, and even occasionally to pray for its more perfect operation.

The village was greatly saddened, early in July, by the death of Jenny Joe, a real servant of Christ, whose last days of suffering from cancer were met with a real faith and unbreakable spirit. Thus only a few of the Tetlin folk journeyed to Tanacross this year on the Fourth of July for the memorable consecration of the new church. We were thrilled by the beauty of this new house of God and by the impressive ceremonies inaugurating its use. But Tetlin was disappointed too in the annual 100-meter barefoot free-style dash, as Titus David, the local entry, was left far behind by the blistering sprint of a man named Gordon. But spirits soon revived and the usual cries of "next

Vegetables and flowers grown at Tetlin in the upper Tanana Valley. Photo taken on August 1st by Everett Wilde, Tetlin, Alaska.

year" were heard as the Bishop boarded the Pacer to return to his duties.

Many friendships too were found on the end of the airstrip used as our baseball diamond. The young people took especially keenly to this game, and we would often play far into the Arctic twilight till the b a l l could hardly be seen. Unfortunately many of the players left Tetlin about midsummer to work at outside jobs so that our plans of getting up a team that might be able to play other similar groups in Tanacross or Northway never really materialized. Still it was good fun for us when we did play, and gave the Church just one more opportunity to bear its witness in another area of life.

Another high point of the summer was a special children's service in the church one Sunday morning, in which we acted out the story of David and Goliath. Chief Peter was distinctively royal when enthroned and crowned as King Saul, and Roy David proved to be a most menacing Goliath, armored in mosquito netting from head to toe and looking very much like a medieval knight in spite of, as a local touch, the broad double-bladed axe which he wore as his weapon.

Life has been far from dull here in Tetlin, yet I have found here a great peace, too, a peace of soul w h i c h comes from a life lived close to God. His presence is very real to t h e s e people, and in contrast to the rush of life in the States, the people of Tetlin take time to be still and listen for His voice. In this and many ways the people of Tetlin have given me far more than I can ever repay, more, certainly, than my feeble attempts to understand and meet their needs by my ministry. In a few days I shall be on my way b a c k to my further training towards the ministry. But I shall miss Tetlin in the days ahead and I feel as though a part of me will stay on here. I shall miss most of all the friends I have here, those I have

mentioned and many more that I do not have the space to tell of. And yet I know that we are truly one in spirit and that as time goes by we shall meet often in prayer and be drawn together even more closely in communion with our Lord.

We have been thrilled by the enthusiastic support given our subscription campaign by some of our subscribers. Our Alaskan Churchan family is growing steadily, and we pray it may continue to do so. Why not give an Alaskan Churchman subscription for Christmas this year?

We welcome with thanksgiving two new workers at Fort Yukon. Miss Harriet H. Keefer, P.H.N., has come to us late in September after nine years of Public Health nursing in Maine. Miss Keefer will replace Barbura Clintsman Carter as head nurse at the hospital. She has already fitted right into the life at the hospital and mission and we pray that her time there may be long and blessed.

Another recent arrival at the Hudson Stuck Hospital is Miss Elizabeth Klemm of Michigan and more recently New York. Miss Klemm has replaced Miss Helen Kibbe as secretary-treasurer of the hospital. Miss Kibbe left for the States a few weeks ago on regular furlough and does not plan to return to Alaska. While regretting Miss Kibbe's departure we are thankful that such a capable successor has been found and we are sure that Miss Klemm will make a real and lasting contribution to the work of the Church in Fort Yukon.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Carter, Jr.

Miss Barbura Clintsman, head nurse at the Hudson Stuck Memorial Hospital at Fort Yukon, was married on August 15 to Mr. Harry E. Carter, Jr. of Fort Yukon.

Miss Clintsman came to Alaska in June of last year and has given splendid service in the medical work there. Mr. Carter has been serving on the maintenance staff of the hospital for the past few months.

The Rev. Norman H. V. Elliott officiated at the ceremony and Bishop Gordon pronounced the benediction. Mrs. R. T. Leight served as matron of honor and Mr. Grafton Bergman was Mr. Carter's best man.

After continuing their work on the hospital staff until November 1 Mr. and Mrs. Carter left for the States where Harry hopes to continue his schooling. Our prayers and good wishes go with them as they take this new step in their life together. In the meantime we are looking for a new nurse, preferably one with no immediate matrimonial intentions!

HUSLIA WAS MY HOME

By Don Gardner ETS, 1954

The School at Huslia

A few years ago, after serving a stint in the Army and after spending a few months in the brush, I decided to cancel my subscriptions to "Outdoor Life" and "Field and Stream"—I was finished with the great outdoors forever!

But nature hath charms! A few more years of city life taught me to appreciate the wonders of the woods. By the time an opportunity for work in Alaska presented itself I had long since overcome my Army experience, and I volunteered. The months preceding my departure for Alaska were full of apprehension about what I would find there. My classmates at the Episcopal Theological School were no help whatever. They dug up fascinating stories about man-eating grizzly bears and strangers freezing to death in mid-August; they even volunteered snowshoes, parkas, and whatever woolens they could spare. Of course, I told myself that they were kidding—but there was always the faint possibility that what they were saying might be true! When our party left for Seattle early in June I had begun to wonder if I shouldn't have packed at least one set of winter underwear. My doubts and uncertainties about the whole venture were then surpassed only by my eagerness to be about my Father's business.

Ours was a whirlwind trip from New York. Having been whisked through Seattle and Fairbanks, I decided somewhere up in the clouds that there was no turning back now. Instead, I turned my eyes toward the tundra. In little more than a day and a half after leaving the ground at Idlewild I was disembarking bag and mosquito net on the little landing strip at Huslia-on-the-Koyukuk. The

flight from Fairbanks in Bishop Gordon's "Blue Box" was my first experience in a peanut-sized aircraft, and considering the poor weather conditions on that day, it was comforting to imagine that the Bishop's threefold strength of Holy Spirit was standing us in good stead.

I hadn't had time between hops to change clothes into something more woodsy. When I alighted from the plane clad in palm beach suit and other refinements I felt somewhat like a fish out of water. I came here making no pretense at knowing anything whatever about Alaska, and palm beach suit or not, I know that the natives immediately recognized me as a dyed-in-the-nylon Cheechako.

The people who had come up from the village to meet us were immediately friendly, and their smiles and greetings made me feel very welcome. We talked together as they led me to my quarters in the rear of the territorial schoolhouse. After a few months of wondering, I knew that I was going to like it here.

My two rooms in the schoolhouse impressed me as far more luxurious than I had anticipated, and I have since found them most comfortable. Looming large in the kitchen is a great wood stove whose friendship I was destined to cultivate. Only after I had discovered its insatiable appetite for wood and my inability to cook on it, did I realize that for a few weeks it was to dominate my household completely. I was much relieved when Bishop Gordon arrived with a gas stove which liberated me. Outside of a few minor difficulties I have managed better than I expected in cooking for myself. With the help of a cookbook borrowed from Lucy Sackett I have whipped up a few dishes that I have never tasted before and will probably never taste again.

At first I was a little confused about what my job in Huslia would be; the simple mechanics of spreading the Gospel in a strange place confounded me. About an hour after my arrival I found out. I was besieged with little children who wanted to know when school would begin, and who affectionately named me "Teacher". It was not until after we had our first service of Evening Prayer that night that I received another name, "Preacher", both of which I have tried to be worthy of all summer.

I couldn't have come into Huslia at a better time. The whole village was assembled during June before starting out for their fishing camps early in July. I began a Bible School immediately which met every day until the original attendance of about thirty or more students had dwindled to three as the families boated up river one after the other. The children here have proven to be a special delight, for they are eager, intelligent, and normally inquisitive. They listen to Bible stories, play games, plan projects, and sing songs with an abandon and appreciation that is not found in a world of television and other sophisticated amusements. We resumed the Bible School in August as the families plowed back down the river to take up life in the village again.

Of all the confirmation classes that I shall ever teach, I don't think that I shall ever be as proud of them as I am of the one that met here this summer. In little more than a month twelve teen-age boys and girls had memorized the catechism, and can answer simple questions about the Prayer Book and the Bible. I appreciate how diligently all of them must have applied themselves since only a few can read and almost all learning was done by listening and memorizing. Another class of four youngsters was prepared in Hughes when I flew there on the mail plane for a week's stay in July. I have come to the conclusion that teen-agers are the same the world over, for these kids giggled and cavorted, but managed to learn, the same as similar classes at home.

Our services of worship this summer have been simple, but I hope meaningful to the people. I looked forward to our services together in the schoolhouse. Though frequently our prayers were interspersed with the loud crying of several infants, I think nonetheless that, at least to God's ears, it may have been music.

My Boy Scout first-aid manual has stood me in fine stead several times this summer. With the aid of tremendous quantities of vaseline and sulfa pills, I have effected some miraculous cures, hoping all the while that my luck as a medico would outlast the vaseline.

Some of my questions about everyday activities here in the village never ceased to amuse the natives. Even I appreciate them as pretty naive now. I took particular delight in watching Little Sammy and Willie Vent piecing together their new log cabins, and in standing by as Katharine Attla and Annie Vent wielded swift knives in cutting the fish fresh-caught in their nets in the river. I watched in amazement as whole families trundled their household effects down to the river, loaded their boats, and, with their dogs in tow, pushed slowly upstream to their fishing camps. I also saw them return with bundles of dried fish and with cord wood, happy to be back within the relatively gnat-free confines of the village. I enjoyed visiting the natives in their homes, and was always delighted when they stopped in at my place to chat for a few minutes. Conversations with Olin, Billy Sam, Edwin Simon, and many others helped me to learn much about life in Alaska. To all of the people here who have been so kind and so liberal with their friendship go my thanks for making this summer a tremendous experience for me.

Huslia will always be synonomous with Jack and Lucy Sackett too, for I have spent many enjoyable hours at their trading store. The venerable Jack Sackett has held me fascinated with his tales of the West and of Alaska when they were wild and woolly, and has tolerated my attempts to imitate him in telling a good yarn. His wife, Lucy, has helped to make Huslia seem a little more like home. Her lemon meringue pie is the best west of the Rockies, and more than once she has come to my aid when cooking and other difficulties were more endured than enjoyed.

The summer has passed quickly—far too quickly indeed for the job that still remains to be done here. I laugh now when I think of the three-month eternity that confronted me last June. I hope that my brief stay here this summer will count for something in helping the advance of Christ and His Church among these people. At least now I have learned the meaning of the imperative "Go" as it concerns the Gospel. I pray that I may never again be apprehensive about going where Christ is needed—no, not even about going to a remote fishing village in the interior of Alaska.

An Alaskan Winter Scene

A SEMINARIAN IN THE ARCTIC

By Alwin Reiners, VTS 1954

It was 4:30 in the afternoon. It had been a cold, foggy day in Kivalina. Most of the men had not gone hunting and it was too cold for the women to work much outside. Suddenly, the church bell rang—loud, long and joyously, calling the people to Evening Prayer.

As I watched from the mission house next to the church, people began coming toward the church from both ends of the tiny village. Men wearing their fur parkas and the women also wearing their calico parkas, longer and brightly colored; some with babies on their backs, others with small children by the hand and a few with both. Some of the men came with small children, too.

They came and gathered outside the church, around the bell, the men in one group, the women in another, and the children ran all about, playing and tagging.

Just before five they began going into the church, and at five the lay-reader again rang the bell vigorously. Then he went in and took his place at the small portable organ. Then one of the women announced the first hymn. Another hymn, then all sat and an elderly woman arose and spoke, reciting in the Eskimo language some scripture passage which she had translated and memorized, after which she announced another hymn. Others in their turn stood and recited or gave thanks and praise to God in their own tongue a witness to a simple, deep, wonderful faith. Some merely announced hymns which were sung by all with great enthusiasm. Such hymns as "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder" were done in full harmony, the men being on one side, the women on the other and the children up front.

When the service had lasted about forty-five minutes, the woman leader

Church of the Epiphany, Kivalina

stood and announced the last hymn. We all stood to sing it. Then kneeling, a blessing was said together. All sat quietly for a minute and then filed out. Two old Eskimo ladies came over and shook my hand. The people stood outside for a time and chatted and gradually moved off to their tents. Back to the daily round, the common task. This was the people of God at Kivalina, the Holy Folks, easy going, friendly, generous and helpful. There is a deep seriousness in their worship, neither dripping with piosity, nor flippant, but sincere and reverent. This was Kivalina. I visited here soon after arriving in Arctic Alaska.

The scene shifts to Kotzebue where I lived two and one-half months. There is no bell to ring to proclaim the beginning of a service of corporate worship of God by His people; indeed, there is not even a church building Rather, they use the Alaska National Guard Hall and in the not too distant past they met in their homes.

The altar is two wooden benches covered with a simple cloth and

Ice piled on the beach at Kotzebue in the spring

graced with a wooden cross and two candles. An Eskimo woman comes to the door with her small grandson by the hand. She pauses and bows her head before the cross, makes the sign of the cross and moves inside to one of the benches where she sits and bows her head in prayer.

Down the beach come others: Norma, who has walked five miles with her baby on her back to attend this service; Chester, who has told his employer, "I go to church FIRST, then I work for you"; Charlie, who leads the singing and whose physical sight is failing though his spiritual sight grows keener and brighter as he continues this earthly pilgrimage; Letty and Tony, who come with their six children; Hannah, who will later help teach the Church School; yes, all these and more.

The service begins; Charlie pitches the music and sets the pace. It is the service of Morning Prayer, said in unison with the Church throughout the world on this Sunday morning. There is no organ, not even enough hymn books to go around. Some can't read the Prayer Book but they have memorized and join in and help make a joyful noise to the Lord.

These are the folk with whom I have had the privilege to live, to whom I have preached God's word, with whom I have supped. These are the sick I have visited and with whom I have prayed. These are the children with whom I have played. And one is the mother whose dead baby I have buried.

They are no longer merely dull pictures in "Forth Magazine", or figures on a mite box. They are real live people—God's children as are you and I. They too, have their wants and needs and cares and loves and dislikes. They have good times, and bad times, joyous ones and tragic ones. They too need the Gospel of Jesus Christ and are thankful that they have it. Never again can I stand outside their fellowship and merely watch and report as I did in Kivalina. Rather, through the manifestations of their love, they have made a place for me in their hearts and minds and I have come to know and love them. When it came time to leave Kotzebue, the first few days there were recalled

to mind. The cabin was cold, and without a stove, and there were many hours of loneliness. Time and time again I was driven to pray God for guidance and strength and courage. My prayers were answered and the answer came partly through these people.

To the casual observer there is no church in Kotzebue, at least there is no building to symbolize this. Yet the Church, as the body of Christ, as God's redeeming community, is certainly here with His blessing.

Early in September Miss Edith Stricker, Assistant Housemother at St. Mark's Mission, Nenana, was painfully wounded when a bullet accidentally discharged by one of the Mission boys struck her in the head. Miss Stricker spent a month in the hospital in Fairbanks, but more expert attention was required to care for damage to her left eye and jaw, so she recently flew to her home in New York for further treatment. We fear it will be some weeks before she regains her strength again, so it will not be possible for her to return to her post in Nenana. Our prayers are surely with her that she may be completely healed and restored to health, and we are deeply grateful for the wonderful spirit and patience she has shown.

Those who came the longest distance to meet and hear Bishop Sherrill when he visited Fairbanks on August 28 were the Rev. Cameron Harriot, staff members at St. Mark's Mission, and Indian people of the Mission at Nenana. Mr. Harriot and some of his people made a round trip of about 150 miles in a small open boat to be present. Incidentally, the small boat is a contribution (by faith) of the Young People of the Diocese of Alabama who are in the process of raising money during this year to cover the cost of the little craft.

To help out at Nenana, Miss Carol Strathman has recently been transferred to St. Mark's Mission from Fort Yukon to act as Assistant Housemother until the arrival of someone to fill the position permanently. Miss Strathman's service in Alaska so far has been brief but extremely varied. She started out as a summer volunteer Bible School teacher; then she took over for a while the work as Secretary-Treasurer at the Fort Yukon hospital; and more recently has done religious education work and ward duty at the hospital—and now to Nenana as housemother and some real practice in the great variety of domestic duty required there.

Mr. Jan Wendland, a recent graduate of Wofford College, Spartanburg, S.C., has been serving as "Housefather" at St. Mark's Mission since early summer. To attempt to list all of Jan's various jobs and contributions to the Mission would be completely impossible, but he has proved to be a most valuable member of the staff in every way.

Miss Else Smithcors, a student at Windham House, spent the summer assisting at St. James' Mission, Tanana. Miss Smithcors was so impressed by the work in Alaska that she offered (after a little persuasion by the Bishop) to help out at Christ Church Mission, Anvik, this winter. So she is now at the lower Yukon Mission, assisting Mr. Wilcox in the work at Anvik, Shageluk and Holigachuk.

Mr. Page H. Kent is now serving as lay assistant at St. Matthew's Parish, Fairbanks, and general missioner among the native people residing in the city. Page filled in last year at Pt. Hope during the vacancy there, so he is well qualified to carry on this work in the absence of a priest regularly appointed to the position.

Missions and Staff

Allakaket	St. John's-in-the Wilderness	The Rev. Richard S. Miller
Anchorage	All Saints'	The Rev. Albert J. Sayers
Anvik	Christ Church	The Rev. Glen M. Wilcox Miss Else Smithcors
Cordova	St. George's	m. Valdez
Eagle	St. Paul's St. John's	The Rev. Norman H. V. Elliott
Fairbanks	St. Matthew's	The Rev. Gordon T. Charlton Mr. Page H. Kent
Ft. Yukon	St. Stephen's	The Rev. Richard T. Lambert The Rev. Albert E. Tritt Mr. Ned Thomas
	Hudson Stuck Memorial Hospital	Miss Jean E. Aubrey, P.H.N. Miss Harriet H. Keefer, P.H.N. Miss Mary O. Hayes, R.N. Miss Elizabeth Klemm Mr. Ray T. Leight Mr. Gilbert Prince, Jr. Mr. Huntington Roberts
Juneau	Holy Trinity	The Rev. Samuel A. McPhetres
Ketchikan	St. John's	The Rev. John K. Watkins
	St. Elizabeth's	The Rev. Lewis Hodgkins
Kivalina	Epiphany	Mr. Milton Swan
Nenana	St. Mark's	The Rev. Cameron Harriot Miss Martha I. Webb Mrs. Dorothea S. Jacobs, R.N. Mr. Jan Wendland Mr. Fred Mueller Miss Carol Strathman
Petersburg	St. Andrew's	m. Wrangell
Pt. Hope	St. Thomas'	The Rev. Rowland J. Cox Mr. Roy Vincent
Seward	St. Peter's	The Rev. L. Russell Clapp
Sitka	St. Peter's-by-the-Sea	The Rev. Henry H. Chapman
Skagway	St. Saviour's	m. Juneau
Tanacross	St. Timothy's	The Rev. Robert B. Greene
Tanana	St. James'	The Rev. Walter W. Hannum
Valdez	Epiphany	The Rev. Robert Grumbine
Wrangell	St. Philip's	The Rev. Hugh F. Hall

In addition to the missions listed above, and as opportunity offers, members of the staff hold services at the following stations:

Annette Island	Chalkitsik	Kotzebue	Palmer
Arctic Village	Dot Lake	Minto	Shageluk
Beaver	Hologachaket	Rampart	Stevens Village
Big Delta	Hot Springs	Pt. Lay	Tetlin
Bettles	Hughes	Mt. Edgecumbe	Venetie
Circle	Huslia	Noatak	
Coschacket	Kenai	Nome	

THE SEAL OF THE MISSIONARY DISTRICT OF ALASKA
1895